

22 December 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Morning Meeting of 22 December 1965

Mr. Helms was in the chair as Acting DCI.

R. J. Smith reported on the size and weight of attack by sixty-three U. S. Navy aircraft against the Uong Bi power plant this morning. One hundred tons of ordnance were dropped. Three aircraft were lost. Smoke encompasses the target area.

Concerning the recent ORR memo on Cambodia and the DCI's question about disseminating it to DOD officials, Smith reported that the ORR information is being incorporated in an OCI memo being done in answer to a request from McGeorge Bundy's staff.

Responding to a recent inquiry from Mr. Helms, Smith said that there is no evidence of augmented ChiCom naval strength in the Taiwan Strait area, but in the event the ChiNats, who are nervous about the situation there, request U-2 coverage of the Strait area, an affirmative response to such a request would be politically worthwhile.

Smith noted a request put to [ ] by Secretary McNamara yesterday. The Secretary feels our air strikes in North Vietnam are hitting too many new targets and may not be carrying out enough operations against old targets to ensure continuing interdiction and destruction of roads and bridges. A survey of the current state of NVN targets is to be done. DIA has been tasked with the job. The Agency will support DIA. 25X1

Smith noted that the Vice President and his party which will be leaving for Manila on 27 December left town suddenly yesterday and went to Minnesota. Briefings for the Vice President are thus up in the air. We remain in contact with George Carroll and will do whatever we are asked.

Smith noted the three recent operational ICBM firings from Plesetsk and cited new evidence that the firings involve the old SS-6 rather than the SS-7.

Smith initiated a discussion of problems arising from a proposal recently made by Secretary McNamara to NATO concerning the establishment of a NATO working group on intelligence data and intelligence exchanges. [REDACTED]

25X6

[REDACTED] We had not previously been advised of the Secretary's proposal nor had Tom Hughes or Joe Carroll. Mr. Helms noted that it is not in the Agency's interest to develop a plan for extensive intelligence exchanges within NATO. Bross noted the problem of making this position stick in the light of political considerations. (See Action 1)

25X1 [REDACTED] reported on a meeting yesterday between Godfrey of OCI and Bowdler of the White House staff concerning the Dominican Republic. Bowdler invited advice on what policy actions might be undertaken. The OCI memo on the DR situation was completed yesterday. Copies were tabled. Mr. Helms said he would look it over and a decision on the manner in which this is to be disseminated will be made later.

Referring to the DCI's recent query about disseminating a memo on objectionable Government appointees in the DR, [REDACTED] said a new and updated memo will be prepared and available on 2 or 3 January.

25X1

Kent reported a useful briefing and discussion yesterday in which Agency officers described for Fisher of ACDA and certain DOD representatives the status of intelligence capacities and limitations as they relate to disarmament.

Kent noted that he had but two papers for USIB consideration next week. One is the six-month projection of scheduled estimates, and the other is the quarterly supplement to the PNIO's. It was agreed that efforts would be made to get USIB concurrence without calling a formal USIB meeting. At A/DCI inquiry Kent said that the two NIE's on Turkey and Panama were approved by USIB this week.

25X1 Mr. Helms informed Kent of a call made to Helms by Rostow yesterday. Rostow had certain suggestions to improve NIE's. Mr. Helms had asked [REDACTED] of BNE to discuss this with Rostow. Kent was requested to see to it that [REDACTED] does this.

25X1

SECRET EYES ONLY

ADD/S noted that restrictions on shipments of goods, household effects, etc., to India and Pakistan have been lifted and shipments will now resume.



25X1

*attached*  
In response to Mr. Helms' inquiry, [ ] explained that the Washington Post article this morning on intelligence inabilities in Vietnam is largely dead right and that U. S. military tactics and doctrine are largely responsible for the problem. (See Action 2)

25X1

Houston reported that Senator Morse will not be back in the U. S. before tomorrow at the earliest. The Morse staff has been alerted to our willingness to meet with the Senator.

DD/P asked if there was anything new on arrangements to meet with Senator Robert Kennedy. The response was in the negative. (See Action 3)

Bross referred to the problem of the NSA Daily SIGINT Summary. [ ] told Bross that he feels obligated to show this publication to Secretary Vance and perhaps Secretary McNamara. [ ] belief is that the publication will irritate them and that they are likely to terminate it. It was noted that OCI is keeping a dossier on the nature of reporting in this publication. Mr. Helms stated that he felt there are too many intelligence publications throughout the Community and believed it the most advisable course of action to inform [ ] to go ahead and show it to Vance or McNamara.

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25X1

Sheldon referred to indications that the Agency may be asked to take the initiative and fund certain R&D intelligence projects developed by ACDA relating to disarmament matters. It was agreed that the Agency should probably avoid being charged with initiating and funding of such matters, and it was agreed that Sheldon would discuss this further with DD/I inasmuch as the approach is being made through NPIC.

SECRET EYES ONLY

ACTIONS:

1. D/DCI/NIPE is requested to take on the problem presented by the proposed NATO intelligence working group and to keep the Agency informed of developments in this regard.

2. Noting that he had requested [ ] and the FE Division to prepare a progress report on identification of the Viet Cong as a follow-up report to Secretary Vance, Mr. Helms asked C/SAVA to ensure that this is done. It was noted that [ ] will return to Washington on 4 January. (C/SAVA by 15 January)

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C/S - 100  
Done -  
P-25X1  
2/3/66

3. OGC is requested to remind Mr. Helms periodically of the desirability of meeting with Senator Robert Kennedy to discuss the Senator's recent trip through Latin America. DD/P is requested to expedite a paper on Mondlane which the Africa Division is working out with the Department. The Senator had asked Mr. Helms about Mondlane recently. (DD/P - Status report by 10 January)

4. The Acting/DCI requested that word be passed in staff meetings to avoid the tendency to wait until the eve of a holiday period to send Agency papers and memos to higher echelons. This merely clogs the system. (All)

[ ]  
for L. K. White

25X1

## **Despite Electronic Intelligence**

# **U.S. Military At Disadvantage In Finding Enemy**

By John T. Wheeler

SAIGON, Dec. 21 (AP)—Despite elaborate scientific gadgetry and a multiplicity of intelligence agencies, the U.S. military command is severely hampered by what one senior American officer calls gross ignorance of enemy movements and intentions.

Some U.S. military circles consider the intelligence gap to be a major weakness of the Allied war plan to defeat the growing Communist military machine in South Vietnam.

The Vietcong and North Vietnamese units seem to be everywhere and nowhere. The dilemma of finding and fixing Communist units for a battle was never solved by the French during their war here. Often U.S. and government troops fare little better.

On the other hand, Communist intelligence is rated as excellent by U.S. military sources. The Vietcong's abil-

### **News Analysis**

ity to ambush Vietnamese and now American units at the time and place of the enemy's choosing is frequently shown.

Government officials have said in the past that the communists have penetrated every level of the Vietnamese military. This includes intelligence agencies and the groups charged with planning and executing military operations. Would-be allied informants know they stand an excellent chance of being compromised if they work for Vietnamese intelligence.

The communists, particularly the homegrown Vietcong, also can count on the rural population for intelligence, whether it is given out of fear or to support the insurgent movement.

The United States has developed a number of highly classified electronic means to search out Vietcong units in the jungle. Often they come up with different answers for the location of the Communists.

The very number of American and Vietnamese intelligence agencies sometimes has proved detrimental. Rivalries are fierce. Often the necessary pieces of a puzzle are held by different units but are not put together until it is too late because the units do not exchange information rapidly or are confused by the huge volume of information generated.

Intelligence sources also claim vital information sometimes is disregarded until too late because it does not fit in with previous notions of Communist tactics.